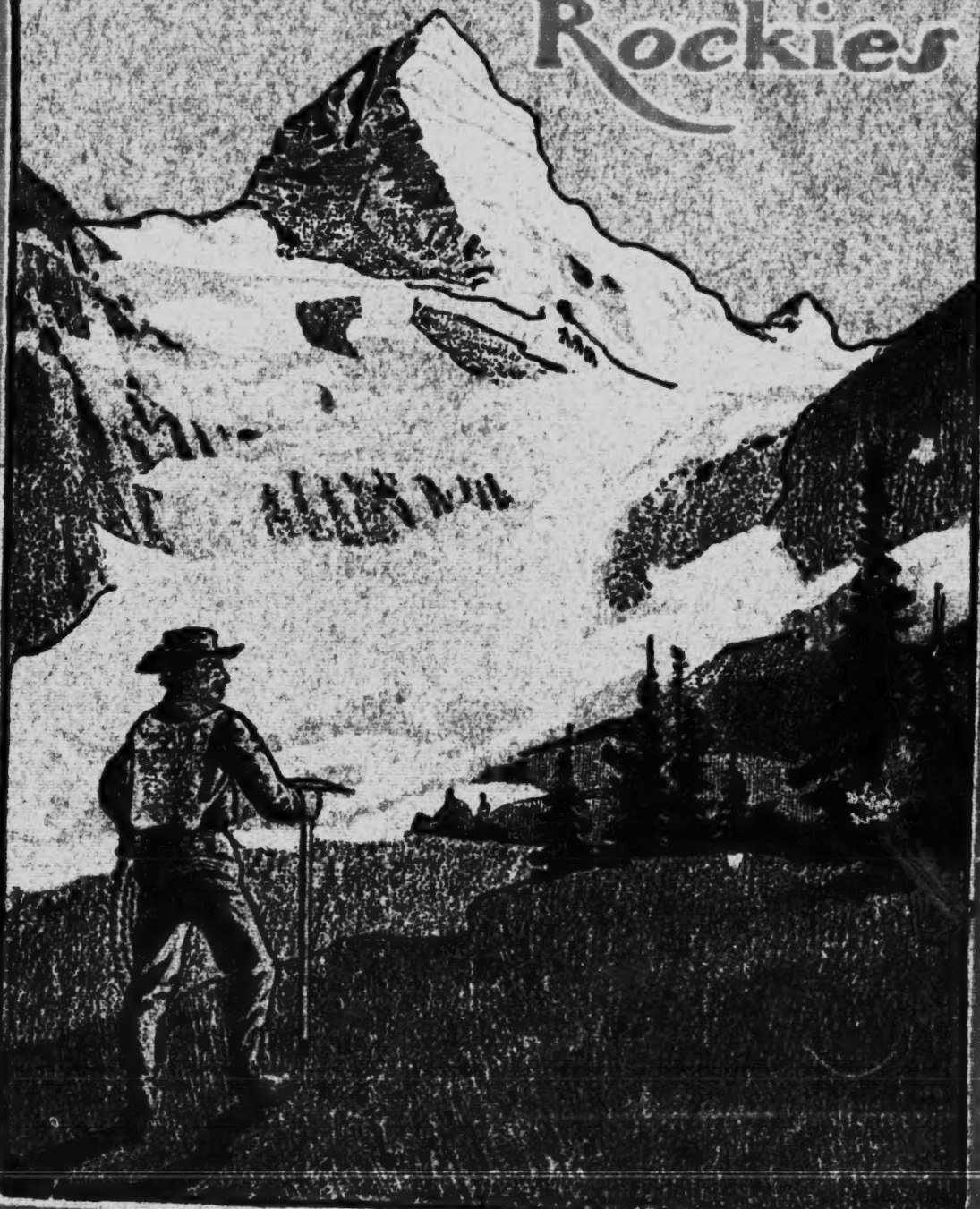


# The Challenge of the Canadian Rockies



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of the

## Canadian Rockies



Issued by the Passenger Department  
**Canadian Pacific Railway Company**  
1903



Three Sisters, Canmore, Alberta.

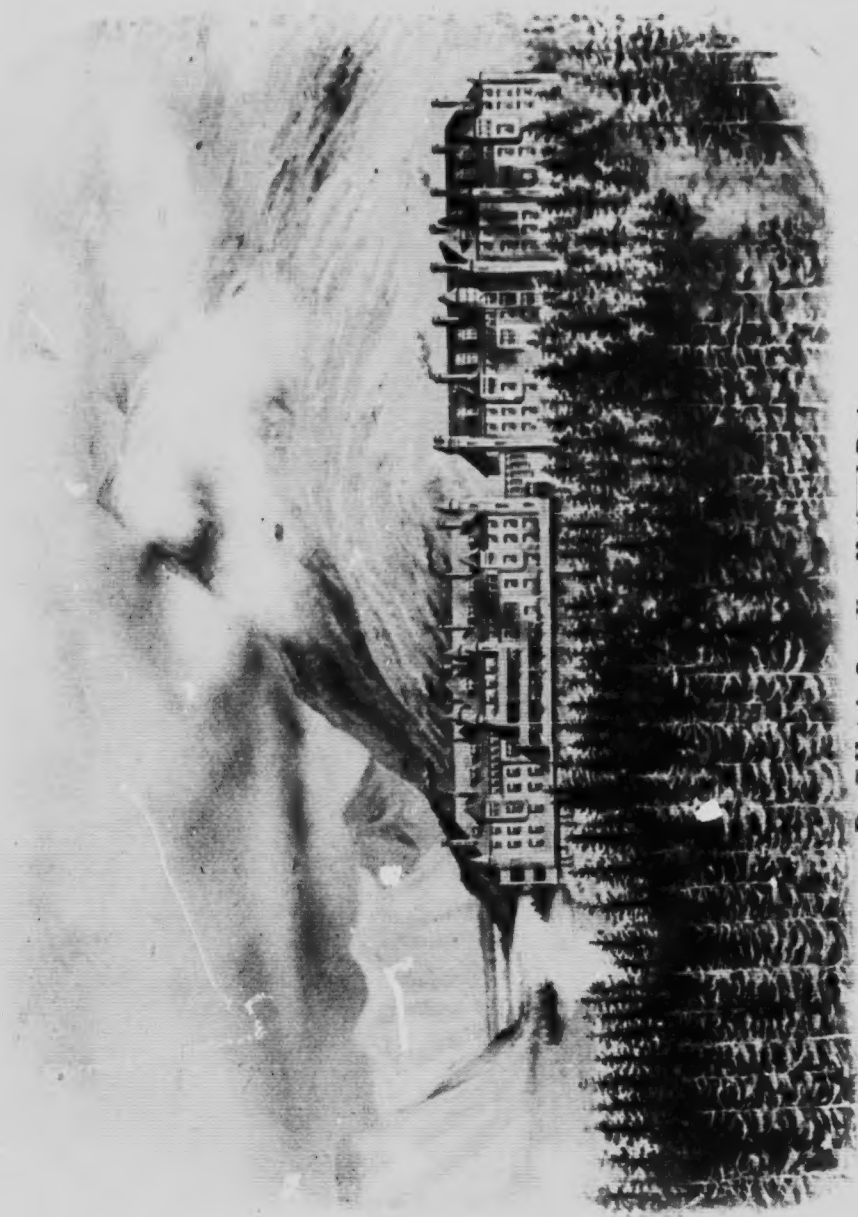
# The Challenge of the Canadian Rockies



The Canadian Rockies offer a challenge to the mountaineer. From the international boundary there stretches northward a treble line of peaks, many of them reaching altitudes of at least 10,000 feet, and a few reaching 15,000. But, as all climbers know, it is not the mere altitude of a peak which constitutes its chief charm. The Matterhorn, so long the envy of all mountain climbers, is not by any means the most lofty of the Alps. There are other things which go to make up a first-

class peak in addition to mere height, and in all features which add to the attractions of mountaineering the Canadian Rockies take precedence over European mountains.

British Columbia, in many respects, is an improvement upon Switzerland. The romantic beauty of Banff, in the Canadian National Park; Field, at the gateway of the charming Yoho Valley; the Lakes in the Clouds, and the Great Glacier of the Selkirks, is not equalled by many of the fashionable Swiss resorts, and, go where one will, the verdict must be that the mountain hotels built and operated by the Canadian Pacific Railway Company form perfect bases from which explorations can be made. There are many ascents to be made direct from the doors of these hotels without having to travel long distances, as in other mountainous countries, before the actual climb commences, and in all



Banff Hotel—Canadian National Park.



directions for miles around are noble peaks whose summits have not yet been attempted. In reaching them great silent forested valleys, which hold many species of game, are traversed, and the mountain streams and lakes afford fishing difficult to surpass. The mountain air is purity itself; the very sunlight brighter than in lower and more humid regions, a fact well known to mountaineers, as it has been shown that the heavens are of a more intense blue when seen from a high elevation than they ever are at sea level. The long days of summer with their lingering



The Beautiful Bow River.

gloomings would alone make a fitting reward for the journey, and to these are added the delights of mountain climbing, opportunities for glorious sport, unlimited riding, and the free, unconventional life of the camp.

There will be room in this enchanted land for the ambitious for many a year to come.

Rev. James Outram, who during the past few years, has made many successful "first ascents" writes: "The tiny land of Switzerland is famed throughout the civilized world for the splendor of its mountain scenery. For variety and charm, as well as accessibility, it has well grounded claims to the title of the prince of playgrounds. But though its scenery is unchangingly



Mount Rundle—Banff.



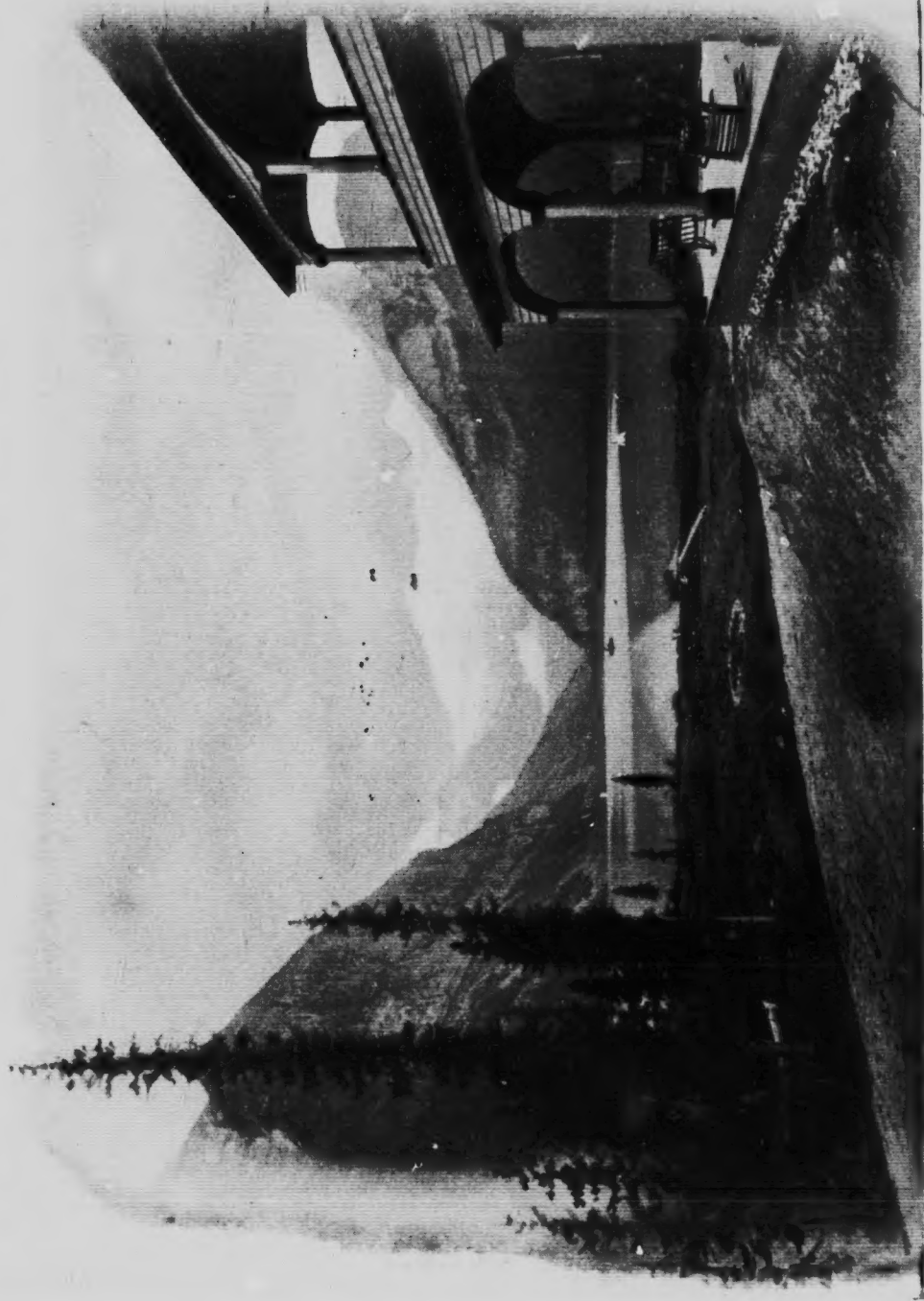
beautiful and the familiar Alpine monarchs retain a ceaseless fascination for the mountaineer, yet his soul will crave—and rightly so—for the chief joy of the climber's ambition—a "first ascent." He turns naturally, therefore, to the great continent of America, where he expects to find plenty of new things, and generally finds them on the largest scale. In mountaineering his confidence is not misplaced, and the paradise of the entire hemisphere is reached among the Rocky mountains in the northern



Bow River Falls, Banff, Alberta.

part of Canada. Here, and here alone, the multitudinous conditions of Switzerland are combined—the wondrous glacial fields, the massing of majestic ranges, the striking precipices and snow-crowned peaks, the forest areas, clear lakes and peaceful valleys. Much of it may be enjoyed without passing from the sight or sound of the transcontinental railroad ; but to view the grandest mountains and to obtain the finest climbs it is necessary to camp out for a short or long period and, as this mode of life is one of the most delightful of experiences, the necessity enhances the pleasure of one's holiday."

Edward Whymper, the conqueror of the Matterhorn, after spending a season in the Rockies and Selkirks, says : "If all the mountain climbers in the world to-day were to make a combined attempt to explore the Canadian Rockies their task would not



Lake Louise, Lakes in the Clouds, Alberta.

be completed within a century. . . . The Canadian Rockies, and, I may add, the Seikirks as well, differ largely from the Swiss Alps, in that they are more uniform in height. There are not so many dominating peaks as in the Alps, which rise to much greater altitudes than the rest of the ranges, but from any of the heights of the Rockies the outlook is a magnificent one. The vast ranges are appalling in their immensity and grandeur, for here are fifty or sixty Switzerlands rolled into one. The opportunities for mountain climbing are plenty, and while many indi-



Lakes in the Clouds, Alberta

vidual peaks are doubtless inaccessible, there are lots of mountains yet to be ascended which will bring credit to their conquerors." Again, upon his return to England, Mr. Whymper wrote the *London Times*: "Amongst things that came under my eye after return there was a copy of an address which had been delivered to the Alpine Club by its late president, upon the expiration of his term of office. After referring to some of the mountain expeditions which have been made in recent years in different parts of the world, Mr. Bryce went on to say that the mention of them "suggested the reflection that the field for maintainers is beginning to show signs of exhaustion. Let us



Victoria Glacier—Lakes in the Clouds.

consider," he said, "what remains"; and in a following passage the Rocky Mountains of Canada are referred to, and are spoken of as being among "the still not wholly exhausted fields!" One's thoughts went at once to that grand view from Calgary, of mountains stretching north and south as far as the eye could see, countless in number, nearly all unknown and unnamed. This



Morning Lake, Valley of the Ten Peaks.

great array is only the fringe, and quite a small part of the border of the mass in general. If you shift your position 80 or 90 miles to the west, and gaze around from one of the higher points about the Great Divide, the reflection that the field for mountaineers is beginning to show signs of exhaustion will not occur; for from east to west, as well as from north to south, extending beyond the range of telescopic vision, one is surrounded by an ocean of peaks, apparently endless, which suggests the word inexhaustible. Though by-and-by, perhaps, the time may come when every one of those unknown summits will have felt the foot of man, that moment will scarcely occur during the lives of those who were



Mount Stephen House, Field, B.C.



addressed by Mr. Bryce, or in the lifetimes of their sons. Now is the opportunity for the adventurous youth! At present he can pick and choose anywhere. It will be idle to complain a few years hence because some of the plums have been gathered in the interim."

This is the expressed opinion of Mr. Edward Whymper, the doyen of the mountaineers, the man who led the way to the Alps,



Mount Stephen, near Field, B.C.

taught the Swiss how to climb their own peaks, who first scaled the dizzy heights of the Matterhorn, and camped in the highest altitudes of the Andes. Mr. Whymper is not only amongst the first of mountaineers; he is an artist, etcher, author, and a close observer of natural phenomena. A busy life has been his in the mountains of Europe and South America, and in 1901 he sought a fresh field and found it in the Canadian Rockies, where he spent the entire summer and autumn. Leaving London on May 23rd, he reached Banff, in the Canadian National Park—one of the most delightful of mountain resorts—on June 9th. In addition to Mr. Whymper, the party consisted of Christian Klucker, Joseph Pollinger, Christian Kauffman and Joseph Bossoney, mountaineers of great experience from the Swiss Alps, and also Mr. G. W. Franklyn, the great-grandson of Sir Samuel Cunard, who was the photographic assistant.

In speaking of the aims which he had in view, Mr. Whymper said: "I desired to concern myself in various ways with matters



Kicking Horse Canon, B.C.

that are beyond the range of the simple Alpinist. The altitudes of all the points and peaks which I should reach were to be determined with some approach to accuracy, and for this purpose I carried four mercurial mountain barometers, all of which fortunately survived the campaign. The paucity of good observations of temperature at considerable elevations in the Canadian Rockies made it necessary to observe the thermometer frequently. Temperature is of the first importance for the mountain climber, and it will be interesting to many to learn that the temperatures which were experienced throughout the journey were moderate, either as regards heat or cold, in comparison with the temperatures which occur on other mountains of equal altitude in similar latitudes. There are many persons who are interested in natural history, and it was desirable to take them into account. The authorities of our Zoological Gardens in London (which are far in advance of any others in the world) had expressed a wish that I would do something for them in the matter of Canadian rodents—of which there are many. The ornithological species are numerous and very widely distributed, and I had to make preparations which would enable me to take back a goodly collection of skins. Insects were also believed to be numerous, and it was only to be expected that a large proportion would prove new to science, since no one, so far as I could learn, had hitherto collected bugs and beetles in the Canadian Rockies. Nor could I afford to neglect the fish and reptiles of that great chain. Let me say, *en passant*, that there is a remarkable absence of noxious reptiles or vermin of any sort throughout the region I traversed, and one can camp anywhere without apprehensions of poisonous bites. I also desired to begin the collection of the flora of the Yoho Valley. Then in order to



Emerald Lake and  
Reflection, B. C.



keep faith with my geological friends, I had to face the work of collecting and carrying rock specimens from all peaks which I was to ascend, as well as of the minerals which I might happen to run across in my wanderings. In these matters it will be found that we have been reasonably successful."

Mr. Whymper expresses himself as being delighted with Field. He says: "No intimation was given me that I should find Field a charming place, and it has been a pleasant surprise to discover in the heart of the Rockies as delightful a look as any reasonable person may desire in the midst of attractive scenery. According to the scheme that I had planned, it was not my intention to have passed any great time at Field; yet I was detained there by the force of its attractions. Whether looking north, south, east or west, the views from Field are fine and the excursions which may be made in the neighborhood are numerous. I was surprised to find that the reputation of Field as a winter resort is not more widely known. Thousands now visit the Engadine and other parts of Switzerland, each winter, many of them being persons afflicted with pulmonary complaints, on account of the crisp, dry air and the abundance of sunshine which make outdoor sports a delight. Now in all these respects Field is undoubtedly the peer of any of the Swiss resorts, and I have no doubt whatever that when it shall be better known it will attract many from the United States and Europe."

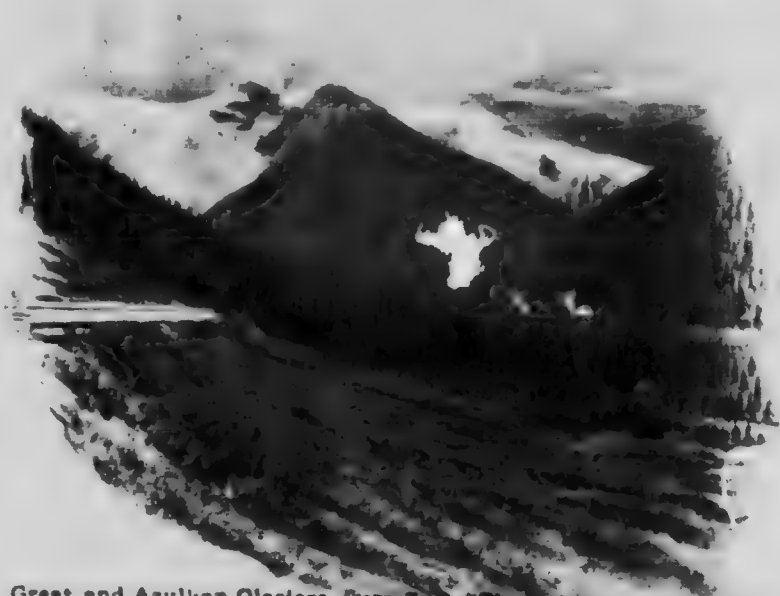




Mount Sir Donald, Selkirk Range.



A brief summing up of the work accomplished by Mr. Whympcr is as follows: Explorations in the neighborhood of the Vermillion Pass, on the eastern slope of the Rockies, occupied his attention from June 18th to July 2nd, when he transferred his outfit to Lake Louise—the lowest of the Lakes in the Clouds, which he declares somewhat resembles Lake Oeshinen, in the centre of Switzerland, but is more picturesque and has more magnificent environments, and after remaining in that district for sixteen days went to Field, at the base of Mount



Great and Asulkan Glaciers, from Snowfield above Glacier, B.C.

Stephen—one of the giants of the Rockies. A week sufficed to show the explorer that the attractions of this delightful spot were so numerous that he would have to defer their exploitation to a later period, and on July 26th he left for that virgin region, the Yoho Valley, immediately to the north, in which he passed almost a month, returning to Field on August 23rd. During the whole of that time the weather was perfect, and, in consequence, he was enabled to do an extraordinary amount of valuable work. Of this picturesque region Mr. Whympcr says: "The Yoho



Observation Tower at Glacier, B.C.

resembles the Yosemite, but its environing mountains are more elevated and magnificent. The Yoho is deeply forested, has fine waterfalls, and at its northern end is an immense glacier, of at least 400 feet thickness, and with a larger area than that of the Great Glacier of the Selkirks." He discovered the Upper Yoho

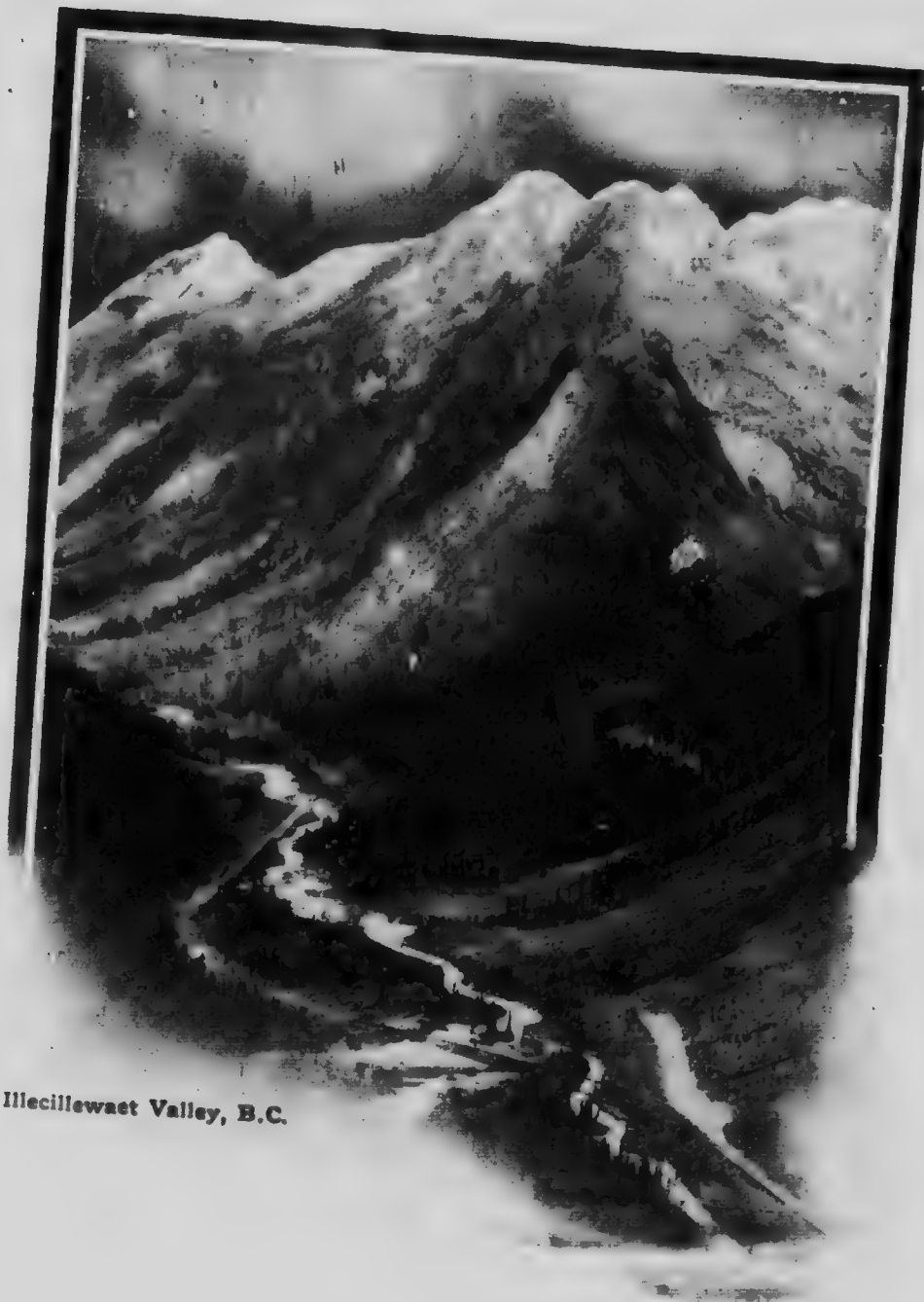


Hermit Mount, from near Rogers' Pass, B.C.

Valley and a new pass which led to the upper valley, and another pass which led direct to Emerald Lake.

He then made a preliminary examination of the Ice River Valley, a very interesting and picturesque region leading northward out of the Beaverfoot Valley, which had hitherto been unvisited.

Lack of space forbids even an attempt at following Mr. Whympers through all his wanderings, but the foregoing should



Illecillewaet Valley, B.C.

convey some idea of the tremendous energy of this veteran mountaineer. As an instance of his determination in the face of difficulty it may be mentioned that when Mr. Habel visited the Yoho Valley he named one of the most forbidding peaks "Troll-tinderne," and declared it to be inaccessible; yet on the 21st day of August Mr. Whymper left camp at 7.25 a.m. and by mid-day was smoking his pipe on the summit.

Commenting upon Mr. Whymper's report, *The New York Evening Sun*, of January 9th, 1902, says, editorially:



A Stiff Climb in the Selkirks.

#### **A NEW YORK NEWSPAPER'S COMMENTS**

"That sturdy old mountaineer, Edward Whymper, has dedicated himself to the exploration of the Canadian Rockies, but with all his experience and address he does not expect to conquer them. 'If all the mountain climbers in the world to-day,' he says, 'were to make a combined attempt to explore the Canadian Rockies their task would not be completed within a century.' This estimate seems grandiose, but there is no better authority on mountains than this Londoner, who began life as a draughtsman on wood. From his youth he has been achieving the



Sicamous Hotel—Shuswap Lake, B.C.



inaccessible and discovering altitudes. His first big climb was that of Mount Pelvoux, in the Alps, supposed at the time (1861) to be the highest peak in France. From the summit his eye told him that Pointe des Ecrins was probably higher, and so it proved. He ascended this peak in 1864. Before 1865 he climbed Alps that had defied assaults and were rated as impossible. On July 14th, 1865, he got to the top of the Matterhorn (14,780 feet), a tragic adventure for his companions, the Rev. Charles Hudson, Mr. Hadow and Lord Francis Douglas, who lost their lives. A Swiss



Cariboo Bridge, Fraser Canon, B.C.

guide also perished. Although Mr. Whympers made two excursions to Greenland, enriching science by his collections, he does not seem to have attempted anything great in mountains again until 1878, when he went to South America and climbed Chimborazo (20,517 feet), Sincholagua, Antisana, Cayambe and Cotacachi, in the Andes. But he does not hold the record for South America. Edward Fitzgerald, another Britisher, has the top score, having, after unparalleled hardships, surmounted Aconcagua (23,417 feet). He was months assaulting this glacial giant.

"Mr. Whympers had a preliminary look at the Canadian Rockies last summer. He is too old a mountaineer, not in years

but experience, to go cloud-roaming without a proper course of preparation. He knows the dangers and rigors of the business. Although five months were spent in the rugged area, of which the Canadian National Park is like a square in a great city, he could only get glimpses of the attractions which it offers to the explorer. Mr. Whympers reports that the Yoho region excels the



White's Creek Bridge, Fraser River, B.C.

Yosemite in majestic beauty. It has denser forests, finer waterfalls, and one glacier superior to any in the Selkirks. He says it has a thickness of at least 400 feet. To his surprise Mr. Whympers found the temperature in the Canadian Rockies milder than at equal altitudes in other regions visited by him. Another discovery will interest those who think of trying to anticipate him—he returns next year to climb other great peaks—that is, there are comparatively few poisonous reptiles. In the American Rockies and the California Sierras the rattlesnake is frequently met with. Veteran John Muir would tell Whympers that the rattler only wants to be let alone, and will never strike unless cornered. Mr. Muir says there is nothing in the mountains, animal or reptile, that any sensible man need fear. The Canadian Rockies are thickly strewn with lakes. Louise, which mirrors Mounts Mitre and Whyte, resembles Lake Oeshinen in Switzerland, but is more

picturesque. The wonders of the Swiss Alps pale before the grandeur of the Canadian Rockies, according to Mr. Whympers. 'The vast ranges are appalling in their immensity,' he says, 'for here are fifty or sixty Switzerlands rolled into one.' He invites all mountain-climbers to try their skill and conquer heights which the foot of man has never trod. We must not all speak at once, but surely there must be Americans adventurous and stal-



Near Vancouver, B.C

wart enough to get their share of the laurels in competition with the British sexagenarian."

**HINTS TO MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS** As to the actual climbing, although Canada is not Switzerland, a tried mountaineer will find himself quite at home in the Rockies or the Selkirks. He will not, of course, understand pack trains and packing, but his men will look after these things for him, and they will usually be able to guide him safely through the forests and across the mountain streams to the foot of whatever mountain he has made up his mind to bag. Owing to the heights of the valleys the actual climb from the last camp to the

summit rarely exceeds 6,000 feet, consequently there is no need for the lofty "last camp" which is the rule in Switzerland. So far as is known every mountain, without exception, if climbable at all, may be bagged between sunrise and sunset of a long northern summer's day.

The man who has won his spurs in the Alps, Caucasus, Himalayas or Andes needs no hints, but, for the benefit of the tyro, it may be worth while to point out that, as a general thing, snow is safer than rock; that couloirs are less dangerous than aretas; that if the rope is to be of any use it must always be taut; that twelve feet should be about the minimum distance between men when they are roped; that crampons are snares, and that boots should be well nailed.

In mountaineering there are two kinds of dangers, the real and fictitious. Beginners are too apt to confuse them and to dread a long snow slope, which may well be the safest route they could take, and to choose, gaily, a path running below a rotten, crumbling rock face, about the most dangerous route a mountaineer can take. However, all these things must be learned by experience. As to the best season of the year, it must be remembered that climbing in the Rockies is yet in its infancy and that opinions may change as a result of experience, so that it may well be that the season which is now considered the best may, in the end, prove to be inferior to others. Alpinists usually make ascents now between the beginning of June and the early part of October. Provided that a man can transport his outfit over the deep snows—something the Indian does without much difficulty, thanks to his snowshoes and toboggans—the month of April, too, in the opinion of experienced guides, ought to be a first-rate month for serious climbing. The days are of fair length and the ice slopes and bergschunds filled up with solidly packed snow, so that some of the difficulties of the summer climbing do not exist at that time.

Mr. W. Dwight Wilcox, F.R.G.S., in his superbly illustrated book of travel entitled "The Rockies of Canada," gives some hints as to camp life and exploration in the two great mountain chains of the Pacific Province. He says: "Imagine, then, that

**CAMP LIFE  
IN THE  
MOUNTAINS**

you intend to make a trip into the mountains. You must first engage your packer and cook, and procure saddle horses and a full outfit of blankets, tents and general camp necessities. There are agents at Banff, the general starting place for all expeditions in the eastern range, who will furnish you with horses, men and everything needed for trips of whatever length or nature, and thus relieve you of all responsibility.



**Vancouver Hotel.**

"The several ranges of the Rockies have an almost constant trend north-northwest and south-southeast. This fact, along with the general knowledge of the streams and lakes, or information picked up from the Indians, is the main reliance of the camper. Every year the packers who go on such trips gain knowledge of the passes and trails, so that the day is not distant when there will be efficient guides for many of the most interesting excursions. However, necessity for reliance and the use of one's own judgment in picking a way through the obstacles of these mountains are great sources of pleasure. The camper inexperienced in the methods of the Northwest has much to learn. The pitching of the first camp is a revelation to the inexperienced.

After a suitable site has been chosen, with firewood and water conveniently near, and a meadow not far away where the horses may find pasture, the men cut tent poles and the cook spreads his pots and pans upon the crackling fire. The pack saddles and blankets are usually piled beneath some large tree and covered with a sheet, while another sheet covers the packs of provisions. The cook soon has several pots on the fire stewing apples or apricots, making hot water for tea or cocoa, or perhaps cooking the omnipresent bean. Two boxes called cook boxes stand near at hand and they contain cans of condensed milk, all the spices and condiments, small tins of preserves and pickles that have been opened or are in constant use, as well as the dippers, dishes, plates, knives, forks and spoons, which are no less necessary."

The great secret of successful pack travel is to start early, and after six or seven hours' traveling to go into camp and turn the ponies loose to graze. It has been found that pack animals treated in this manner will retain their condition indefinitely, whereas if you start late and move slowly the loads tire the animals far more than if they moved more quickly for a shorter time. Moreover, by going into camp late they have no opportunity to fill themselves before nightfall.

A good pony will carry as much as 300 pounds, but it is far better to underload than to tax their powers to the utmost. On some of the worst trails of the Northern Rockies the Hudson's Bay Company puts about 150 pounds on each pony. However, the head packer will know all about these matters, and without him the tyro would be perfectly helpless.

When starting out for a season's climbing the outfit taken from the east should include nailed boots, strong tweed suits, Alpine club ropes, ice axes and Alpine stocks, for though these things may be bought at one or two places in the Northwest, most men prefer their own patterns. A sleeping bag should be taken for each man, and a Whymper tent 6 x 6 feet for every four persons. It should be made of some light material like rough, unbleached calico, and the floor should be lined with waterproof material. The ice axe preferred by most old climbers weighs

## **A CLIMBING OUTFIT**



four pounds, the head being modeled on that of the pick-axe. Alpine club rope made of manilla-hemp is very light, yet at the same time exceedingly strong, as will be conceded when it is found that 100 feet of it, sufficiently stout to stand a breaking strain of two tons, weighs but 103 ounces. Of course each climber will wish to ascertain, as nearly correctly as possible, the heights to which he has scrambled. Hitherto the Aneroid barometer has been relied upon for such determinations, but Mr. Edward Whymper found during his exploration in the Andes that the Aneroid is not trustworthy if kept at a high elevation for a protracted period. It is valuable for comparative readings taken at short intervals and should not be omitted from the outfit, but the main reliance should be placed upon the Fortin mountain barometer.

A few of the most useful books on mountaineering are :

**BOOKS ON  
MOUNTAIN  
CLIMBING**

Picturesque Landscapes in the Canadian Rocky Mountains, W. Dwight Wilcox, F.R.G.S., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1900 ; Camping in the Canadian Rockies, (An older work by the same author.) The Rockies of Canada, W. Dwight Wilcox, F.R.G.S., G. P. Putnam's Sons, New York, 1900 ; Scrambles Amongst the Alps in the Years 1860-69, Ed. Whymper, John Murray, Albemarle Street, London ; fifth edition, 1900 ; Travels Amongst the Great Andes of the Equator, Ed. Whymper, John Murray, Albemarle Street, London ; second edition.

Experienced Swiss guides are stationed during the summer months at several of the principal mountain resorts in the Rockies and Selkirks—at the Lakes in the Clouds ; Field, at the gateway to the newly discovered Yoho Valley ; and the Great Glacier of the Selkirks. These guides will accompany parties on climbing expeditions, a nominal fee being charged for their services.

**THE  
SWISS  
GUIDES**

Banff, the Lakes in the Clouds, Field, the Great Glacier and the other resorts in the mountains of British Columbia are only reached by the Canadian Pacific Railway, whose Imperial Limited trains cross the continent in ninety-seven hours, leaving Montreal, Toronto and Vancouver tri-weekly during the

**HOW TO  
REACH THE  
MOUNTAINS**

tourist season, in addition to the regular daily transcontinental passenger service maintained throughout the year. During the season of navigation—May to November—there is an alternate route by the Company's magnificent Clyde-built steamers through Lakes Huron and Superior, from Owen Sound on Georgian Bay to Fort William at the north-western extremity of Lake Superior, where the journey is continued by the Canadian Pacific transcontinental trains.

From the middle western States the Soo-Pacific route is the shortest and most direct, daily trains leaving St. Paul and Minneapolis and connecting with the Canadian Pacific at Moose Jaw, in the Canadian Northwest.

From the Pacific Coast and Puget Sound points there is a choice of routes—either by steamer to Victoria and Vancouver, B.C., and thence by the Canadian Pacific, or by all-rail to Mission Junction (forty-three miles east of Vancouver) and the Canadian Pacific transcontinental trains.

Attached to through trains are superbly appointed sleeping cars (both first-class and tourist), with open observation cars through the mountain sections, and the system of elegant dining cars and mountain hotels is unsurpassed in excellence of service.

The rates at the different mountain hotels are \$3.00 per day and upwards, (at Banff, \$3.50 and upwards) with reduced rates to parties making prolonged visits.

For further information apply to any agent of the Canadian Pacific Railway or to

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67 and 68 King William St., E. C. LONDON.

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